

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 8WASHINGTON MONTHLY
June 1985

TILTING AT WINDMILLS

Another terrible decision by the Supreme Court: This one says the CIA does not have to disclose the names of researchers who participated in a CIA study of the control of human behavior, in which mind altering drugs were administered without the subject's knowledge. The court bought the CIA's argument that the researchers were "intelligence sources." Since they were obviously not "sources" in the ordinary sense—they were not Russian dissidents slipping us Soviet missile plans—the court appears to have given the CIA the broadest kind of authority to withhold information from the public. Here is how Linda Greenhouse of *The New York Times* describes it:

"Under the ruling, information the agency says it needs to 'perform its statutory duties with respect to foreign intelligence' is exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. The exemption applies regardless of whether the information is shown to have a bearing on national security and regardless of whether the source of the information is a newspaper or magazine in general circulation..."

—Charles Peters